



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/540,988	01/20/2006	Frank Hofmann	HOFMANN-5	9572

20151 7590 06/08/2007  
HENRY M FEIEREISEN, LLC  
350 FIFTH AVENUE  
SUITE 4714  
NEW YORK, NY 10118

EXAMINER
----------

SINGH, SUNIL

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3673

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-----------	---------------

06/08/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/540,988

Applicant(s)

HOFMANN, FRANK

Examiner

Sunil Singh

Art Unit

3673

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)            | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.                                      |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/28/05</u> .   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____.                          |

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

2. The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Art Unit: 3673

3. Claims 1-6,10-11,18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) or (e) as being anticipated by Knox et al. or Sullivan or Swisher or Ahn et al. or Petrovic or Fisher or Tyrer et al. (US 4286640, 4826215, 5531695, 6227251, 6311734, 6916051, 7100641 )  
Knox et al., Sullivan discloses a pipe comprising partial pipe shells having pin/latch connecting means (see Figs. 1-2, 2, 4, 3, 1c, 3, 2).

4. Claims 1-6,9-11,18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dennehey et al. (US 4340052)  
Dennehey et al. discloses a pipe comprising partial pipe shells having pin/latch connecting means (see Figs. 3-4).

5. Claims 1, 12-14 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hahn et al. (Us 4647256).  
Hahn et al. discloses a sewer pipe comprising partial pipe shells (see Figs. 2,3).

6. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by St. Onge (US 4796669).  
St. Onge discloses the steps called for in claim 15 (see Figs. 1,2).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 7-11, 16,19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hahn et al. in view of St. Onge (US 4796669).

Hahn et al. discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Hahn et al. lack internal/external groove connection and sealing means therein. St. Onge teaches internal/external groove connection and sealing means therein (see drawings). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Hahn et al. to include internal/external groove connection with sealing means therein as taught by St. Onge in order to prevent leakage by forming a more secure connection.

With regards to claims 10-11, it would have been considered obvious to modify Hahn et al. by making the pipe out of reinforced fiber glass since such a design would not experience the deterioration that metal pipes undergo.

9. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hahn et al. in view of St. Onge as applied to claim 16 above, and further in view of Knox et al. or Sullivan or Swisher or Ahn et al. or Petrovic or Fisher or Tyrer et al. or Dennehey et al. (US 4286640, 4826215, 5531695, 6227251, 6311734, 6916051, 7100641, 4340052).

Hahn et al. (once modified) discloses the invention substantially as claimed.

However, the (once modified) Hahn et al. lacks a hinge section between the two partial shells. Knox et al., Sullivan, Swisher, Ahn et al., Petrovic, Fisher, Tyrer et al. and Dennehey et al. all teach a hinge section between two partial shells see Figs. 1-2, 2, 4, 3, 1c, 3, 2, 3-4). It would have been considered obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify the (once modified) Hahn et al. to include the hinge as taught by either Knox et al. or Sullivan or Swisher or Ahn et al. or Petrovic or Fisher or Tyrer et al. or Dennehey et al. since this arrangement keep the proper pipe sections together while allowing the half shell sections to pivot into a closed position.

### **Conclusion**

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sunil Singh whose telephone number is (571) 272-7051. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 10:30 AM - 7:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Engle Patricia can be reached on (571) 272-6660. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3673

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the \_\_\_\_\_ Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Sunil Singh  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 3673



SS  
5/27/07 